

REMARKS

This is an amendment filed along with the Request for Continued Examination (RCE). The RCE was filed in order to submit prior art that was cited in a corresponding foreign application. In view of the amendment, which includes the adding of several claim elements, the final Office Action mailed May 3, 2002 is considered moot. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and presently pending claims, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Present Status of Patent Application

Upon entry of the amendments in this response, claims 1-5, 7, and 9-11 remain pending in the present application. More specifically, claims 1, 7, and 10 are directly amended and claims 6, 8, and 12-21 are canceled without prejudice, waiver, or disclaimer. These amendments are specifically described hereinafter. It is believed that the foregoing amendments add no new matter to the present application.

R.O.C. Patent Publication No. 420327

The claims are amended in order to distinguish over the R.O.C. Patent Publication No. 420327. There are five main points to consider with respect to Publication No. 420327 when analyzing the patentability of the proposed newly amended claims.

1) Publication No. 420327 does not teach or suggest a ***“main panel configured to be attachable to a rack”*** as is claimed. Instead, the Publication includes a back panel of a computer housing being attached to the housing. The term “rack” appearing in the claims has a clear meaning in the art and is defined in the specification with respect to Fig. 1. With the Publication’s computer housing, only one back panel can be attached, as opposed to the claimed rack that can receive a number of sub-panel assemblies.

2) Furthermore, Publication No. 420327 does not teach or suggest that the main panel (back panel) includes ***“pairs of attachment elements, one pair of attachment elements located adjacent to each of the plurality of cut-outs.”*** This feature, now appearing in claims 1 and 6, refers to the attachment means

(35) that allows connection of the sub-panels to the main panel. In contrast to the present invention, the only attachment elements on the Publication's back panel appear to be the elements 27a, 27b, etc. (if these are even attachment elements at all). However, the Publication does not include a ***"pair of attachment elements"*** as is claimed.

3) In addition, the claims further include the aspect of ***"each attachment element of the pair of attachment elements positioned on opposite sides of the respective cut-out."*** In item 2 above, it was pointed out that the Publication does not teach or suggest a pair of attachment elements adjacent to "each" cut-out. This additional aspect further defines over the Publication by defining that the attachment elements are positioned on opposite sides of the cut-out. This feature is clearly seen in Fig. 2 in which the attachment means 35 are positioned on opposite sides of the cut-outs, thus further distinguishing the claims from the Publication.

4) Publication No. 420327 does not teach or suggest the claimed element that each sub-panel ***"individually attaches to the respective pair of attachment elements."*** Firstly, the Publication does not even have a pair of attachment elements for each sub-panel. Secondly, the sub-panels in the publication do not "individually attach..." to the attachment elements. Instead, the Publication includes a singular piece 40 that connects all the expansion cards (sub-panels) to the back panel (main panel) at the same time. There is no "individual" attachment as is possible in the present application.

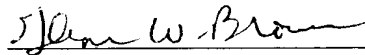
5) The Publication further fails to include the aspect that each sub-panel supports ***"one predetermined type of connector."*** Instead, it appears to be necessary that the Publication has a number of different types of connectors 80 on each expansion card (sub-panel). Instead of allowing the selection of different configurations based on the different types of sub-panels made available by the present invention (Figs. 3-7), the Publication is restricted to the types of connectors that are needed by the expansion card. There is no ability in the Publication and no motivation to include a selection of different

types of connectors, which is a significant advantage of the present invention. In contrast, the Publication has preset connectors and does not have the flexibility to custom design a configuration based on the needs for different types of connectors in a testing apparatus, as is provided by the present invention.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that all rejections have been traversed, rendered moot, and/or accommodated, and that the now pending claims 1-5, 7, and 9-11 are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

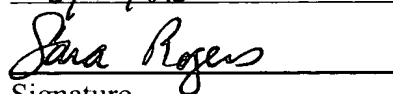
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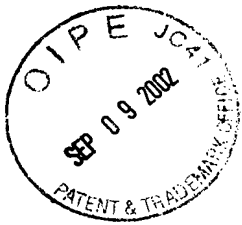


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8/30/02

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ANNOTATED VERSION OF MODIFIED CLAIMS
TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

The following is a marked up version of the amended claims. Amend the following claims by adding the language that is underlined (“ ”) and by deleting the language that is enclosed within brackets (“[]”):

1. (Twice Amended) A modular system interface comprising:

a main panel configured to be attachable to a rack, the main panel [and] including a plurality of sub-panel cut-outs and multiple pairs of attachment elements, at least one pair of attachment elements located adjacent to each of the plurality of sub-panel cut-outs, each pair of attachment elements positioned on opposite sides of the respective sub-panel cut-out; [and]

a plurality of sub-panels configured to be attachable to the main panel, at least one sub-panel including at least one connector cut-out, wherein each sub-panel spans across a respective sub-panel cut-out and individually attaches to a respective pair of attachment elements; and

a plurality of connectors configured to be insertable in the at least one connector cut-out and attachable to the respective sub-panel, wherein the at least one sub-panel is configured to support [supports a respective] one predetermined type of connector.

7. (Once Amended) The modular system interface of claim [6] 1, wherein the [means for removably securing further comprises:] attachment elements comprise a threaded structure.

10. (Twice Amended) The modular system interface of claim 1, wherein each sub-panel further comprises:

a label marking area to identify the respective predetermined type of connector.